

Please insert the following section title before the second complete paragraph on page five, that is, before the paragraph beginning, "Further benefits and features * * *":

ay --BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS--

Please insert the following section title before the third paragraph on page six, that is, before the paragraph beginning, "The ball cage shown in Fig. 1 * * *":

ay --DETAILED DESCRIPTION--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the following claims in "clean" format:

1. (Amended) Ball cage for homokinetic joints, formed from a blank that is configured as a substantially annular spherical segment, the ball cage comprising:

window-type ball pockets located along an equator with substantially equator-parallel bearing surfaces that interact with joint balls, with substantially annular functional zones that are designed at least on outer ring edge areas and that interact with a joint bell, and with substantially annular functional areas that are designed on inner ring areas and interact with the joint spider, wherein on the blank at least some of the functional zones are elevated compared to the neighboring areas of the ball cage.

2. (Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 1, wherein the blank is hardened before finishing the functional zones.

3. (Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 2, wherein on the hardened blank only the elevated functional zones are processed through hard-turning.

4. (Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 1, wherein the blank contains turned, preferable hard-turned reference surfaces.

5. (Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 1, wherein the functional zones, which have been hard-turned, are elevated compared to adjacent surfaces after a finishing process or are at the most on a same level.

6. (Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 1, wherein the blank is formed in a rolling process.

7. (Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 1, wherein window-type ball pockets are stamped.

8. (Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 7, wherein the window-type ball pockets have such dimensions that the surfaces, on which the equator-parallel functional zones are designed, are longer than these and protrude on both sides beyond the functional zone.

9. (Amended) Ball cage for homokinetic joints, formed from a blank that is configured as a substantially annular spherical segment, the ball cage comprising:

ae window-type ball pockets located along the equator with substantially equator-parallel bearing surfaces that interact with the joint balls, with several substantially annular functional zones that are designed on outer ring edge areas and that interact with a joint bell, and with several substantially annular functional areas that are designed on inner ring areas and interact with the joint spider, wherein on a finished component at least some of the functional zones are elevated compared to adjacent surfaces or have at least a same level.

10. (Amended) Ball cage pursuant to claim 9, wherein the cage has functional zones that have an elevated design on fin areas, which separate the ball pockets, and has functional zones that have been hard-turned.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please add the following abstract on the page following the claims:

“ABSTRACT

an Ball cage for homokinetic joints, formed from a blank that is configured as a substantially annular spherical segment, the ball cage includes: window-type ball pockets located along an equator with substantially equator-parallel bearing surfaces that interact with joint balls, with substantially annular functional zones that are designed at least on outer ring edge areas and that interact with a joint bell, and with substantially annular functional areas that are designed on inner ring areas and interact with the joint spider, wherein on the blank at least some of the functional zones are elevated compared to the neighboring areas of the ball cage.”